

REMARKS

Office Action Response. In the Advisory Action, the Examiner refused to enter the amendment after final on the ground that it would require further consideration and search.

Claim amendments. Claim 1 has been amended to include limitations which the Examiner identified as imparting patentability to the patentable subject matter of claims 19 and 20 (Final Rejection at 5). The limitation "said encapsulant blend providing markedly improved performance, with improved toughness and filling characteristics" has been removed and a new claim 31 has been added containing that limitation. The limitation regarding encapsulant-free surfaces has been relaxed somewhat to prevent evasion of the claims by having one or a few sliders which have no encapsulant-free surface.

For avoidance of doubt, because the amendment after final was not entered, the revision markings in the present amendment are with respect to the claims as they existed at the time of final rejection.

Rationale for patentability. Because the particular ratios recited now in claim 1 are unusually advantageous and not disclosed in the prior art of record, it is believed that claim 1 should be allowable in its present form.

Conclusion. For the reasons stated above, it is believed that the pending claims define an invention that is patentable over the art. If the Examiner has any questions concerning this communication, the Examiner is welcome to contact the undersigned at (650) 251-7712.

Respectfully submitted,



By:

Flavio M. Rose, Reg. No. 40,791
c/o MINTZ LEVIN
1400 Page Mill Road
Palo Alto, CA 94304-1124
Phone (650) 251-7700
Fax (650) 251-7739
Customer No. 23980

September 15, 2006